Italy brought to terms, the lands of the valley and mouths of the Rhine intimidated or won to sympathetic subservience, and the treaty of Luneville made operative, the island kingdom was isolated indeed. Such a continental combination would close the door in the face of British commerce. Yet there was a greater world than the Continent and markets quite as important. So a continental coalition would open the highways of the ocean, not one of the powers, great or small, being able to maintain an efficient army with an efficient fleet. The policy of alliances and subsidies was ever at hand, and to this again the English ministry recurred. Neither Austria, Russia, nor Prussia, antiquated as were their systems and policies, unstable as were their governments and finances, uncertain as were their very boundaries and the loyalty of their subjects; patched, darned, and frayed as were their dynastic relations; not one of them was content, nor easy, nor secure. The material was at hand for a new coalition, quite as rotten as others since the dynastic cloth was old on the garment, the growing and novel sense of nationality. To the labor of renovation George and his ministers put their hands; renovation of old stuff, old patterns, old fashions, all of which should have been thrown into the rag-bag.

The war which was imminent would in no proper sense be a war between England and France, but rather an appeal to arms concerning Bonaparte's expansion of the revolutionary system for his own purposes. Well aware that if war was inevitable it should for his own sake come quickly, Bonaparte determined to learn whether it was inevitable, and to do so in such a way as further to endear him to that class of the French people which now appeared to be his strongest support — the great middle class, or bourgeoisie. Whether general, diplomatist, or statesman^ he had never since